

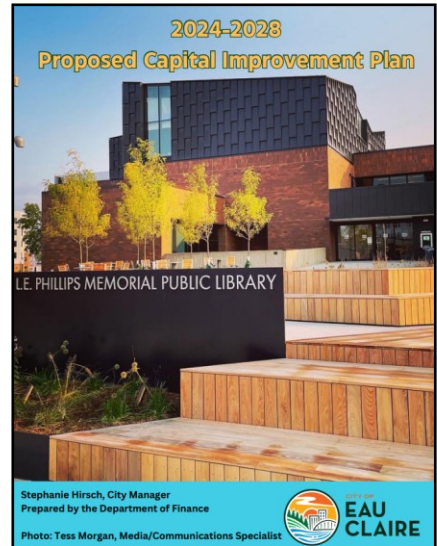
**In This Update:**

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**From the Manager**

**CIP Budget:** Please find linked here [the 2024-2028 CIP Budget](#). Many thanks to Jason Rohloff and Corey Lee for their work preparing the document. Thank you also to Kitzie Winters and Dave Solberg for pouring through one version after another to find places to trim, and thank you to our Directors – especially Police, Fire, and Community Services – as they had to identify many items to pare down. We will be reviewing the budget at upcoming work sessions, with the first being Tuesday, 5/9, following the Council meeting.

**Thank you to Chris Bell:** On Friday afternoon, we wished happy retirement to Fire Chief Chris Bell. Staff, retirees, family, and friends gathered in the bay of Station 2 for a party. Chris joined the Eau Claire Fire Department in April of 1997, which made this April his 26th year in the Fire Department. He became certified as a Paramedic in January of 1998, and was also later certified as a Fire Equipment Operator. He became Fire Captain in January of 2012, Deputy Chief in July of 2013, and Fire Chief in August of 2016. He has served in that role for the past seven years. It's a very challenging job, especially in our resource-constrained environment. The Chief has the ultimate responsibility for ambulance response to residents



throughout the region, from each neighborhood of Eau Claire, to towns and rural areas in a 20+ mile radius of the City limits. The Fire Department also responds to any fire, and this work has gotten more dangerous over the years. As staffing has remained level, our population and number of structures has grown. The intensity of fires has increased, as more highly flammable synthetic material is being used in furniture and construction. Chris has managed these challenges with a tremendous amount of energy, creativity, brains, and determination, and he has accomplished a lot, even though we haven't had much money. During Chris's time as Chief, the Fire Department has seen construction of Station 10, renovation of Stations 5 and 6, and the successful completion of a referendum.

Chris is someone whose mind is always working, and he's always looking for the solution that will help the Fire Department and the City. He is professional, knowledgeable, deliberative, and, on top of all that, mostly easy going. His co-workers said, "We call him the dreamer and a free-range thinker... he'd call us at on the weekends or a holiday with his latest idea." Chris has "as many degrees as a thermometer," but he's still humble. It's fun to work with Chris. He has thoughtful opinions on many different topics from City activities of all different types. And most of the time, he's right! Chris also always has a good story or a funny perspective to lighten a meeting. Chris has so many hobbies and passions, and it's an inspiration to watch someone take on life with such enthusiasm. The list of adventures ahead for Chris and his wife Patti is long – there's no doubt his dreaming will continue -- and they deserve every joy that we know is ahead. We hope Chris will send us updates on each new challenge they take on! As of today (May 1st), Deputy Chief Al Bertrang is Interim Fire Chief. The search for a new permanent chief is underway, and interviews will occur on May 10th.

**Amazing Recue:** We were so proud to be associated with the crew that responded to the call for a child who had fallen into a septic tank last month, due to its faulty cover. I got to visit them at Station 6 and heard more about the

experience. Engineer Scott Mohr, Firefighter Heather Morning, and Firefighter Nathan Much responded to a call for a four-year-old from the town of Pleasant Valley who was trapped in the underground septic tank. The crew shared with me that the diameter of the tank was only about 21 inches. This made it impossible for the larger first responders to fit down it to reach the boy, who was between 10 and 12 feet down. Heather Morning, who is a smaller person, was able to be lowered down head first with her hands extended in front of her to



reach the child and pull him up. Her team held her by a rope attached to her feet and then hauled her and the boy up. They said that, though it felt like a very long time, the dispatch records indicate that

only four minutes passed, from arrival to rescue. This crew has worked together for five years, and they credit some of their success in quick decision-making to the length of time that the team has worked together, which has given them an ability to understand and balance out one another's different strengths.

**Marathon:** The weather wasn't great, but the organizational efforts of volunteers, Marathon leaders, and City staff who helped was awesome. There were so many smiling faces and cheering crowds in every corner of the city. Pictured here are President Berge, who does actually "run Eau Claire" and who also ran the half marathon on Sunday, and Community Service Director Lane Berge. He looks a little cold, but he's getting the job done. Thank you to everyone who helped!



**Fireworks Work Session:** As has been posted, the Council will meet Tuesday at 4PM to continue discussions on whether or not to have fireworks in 2023 and, if the Council wishes to move forward, then where to have them. I'm attaching to this letter the letter from ACE on options so that the public can view it as well on the newsletter webpage. If the Council wants to move forward with a proposed

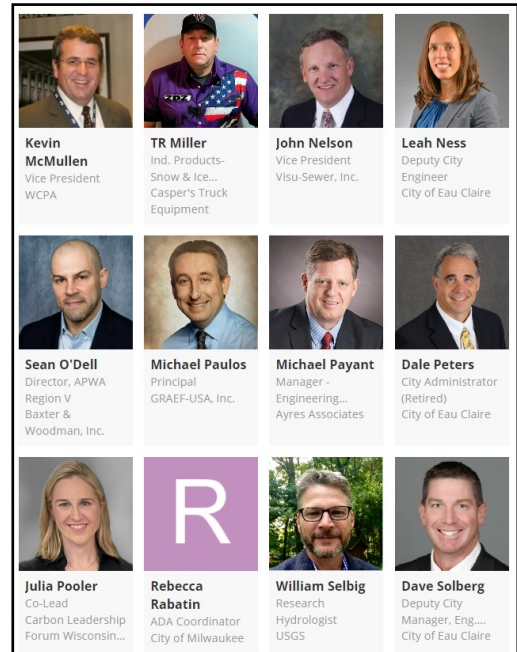
location, we will add a Public Discussion on Monday, May 8th meeting and an agenda item for Tuesday, May 9th.

**APWA Conference comes to Eau Claire:** We are proud to host the American Public Works Association Wisconsin spring conference this week at the Lismore, see: [APWA WI 2023 Spring Conference - Eau Claire](#). Take a [look at some of the speakers](#) that visitors will hear at the conference!

Council Members are, of course, welcome to register to attend any of the conference days to learn more about proven practices and cutting-edge approaches in Public Works and Engineering. If someone wants to join in on the bike tours that Mike Golat and Dale Peters will be leading, that likely doesn't require registration, and if interested, check with Dave.

**International Municipal Lawyers Association Presentation:**

Our Deputy City Attorney recently traveled to Washington DC to present about recent developments in Fourth Amendment law. He shared information about how recent Four Amendment cases apply to local governments. (The Fourth Amendment is: protection of people from unreasonable searches and seizures by the government.) Doug moderated a panel and then answered questions at last week's International Municipal Lawyers Association conference. The conference was attended by hundreds of city attorneys from across the United States and Canada. Thanks for showing off how



**Council Calendar** (With Tentative Work Session Dates)

- ❖ *Monday, May 1st: Council receives Proposed 2024-2028 CIP Budget*
- Monday, May 8th: Regular Council Public Hearing/Discussion Night
  - ARPA Phase II, Allocation II Public Discussion
  - Fireworks Public Discussion (if requested by Council)
- Tuesday, May 9th: Council Meeting
  - Possible Action on ARPA Phase II
  - Fireworks Agenda Item (if requested by Council)
  - 2024-2028 CIP Budget Work Session #1
- ❖ *Thursday, May 18th: Transit Commission reviews and recommends Transit's CIP*
- Monday, May 22nd: Regular Council Public Hearing/Discussion Night
- Tuesday, May 23rd: Council Meeting
  - 2024-2028 CIP Budget Work Session #2
- ❖ *May 25th - Waterways & Parks Commission reviews and recommends Parks CIP*
- ❖ *June 6th: Plan Commission reviews and recommends CIP*

- Monday, June 12th: Regular Council Public Hearing/Discussion night
  - Public Discussion of 2024-2028 CIP Budget
- Tuesday, June 13th: Council Meeting
  - Council action on 2024-2028 CIP Budget
- Monday, June 19th: Joint Plan Commission and City Council Meeting for Zoning Overhaul Kickoff
- Monday, June 26th: Regular Council Public Hearing/Discussion Night
- Tuesday, June 27th: Council Meeting
  - 2024 Operating Budget Work Session 1: Priorities and Parameters
- Monday, July 10th: Regular Council public Hearing/Discussion Night
- Tuesday, July 11th: Council Meeting
- Monday, July 24th: Regular Council Public Hearing/Discussion Night
- Tuesday, July 25th: Council Meeting
- Monday, August 14th: Regular Council Public Hearing/Discussion Night
- Tuesday, August 15th: Council Meeting
- Monday, August 28th: Regular Council Public Hearing/Discussion Night
- Tuesday, August 29th: Council Meeting
- Tuesday, September 5th: Joint Plan Commission and City Council Meeting for Zoning Overhaul Discussion
- Monday, September 11th: Regular Council Public Hearing/Discussion Night
- Tuesday, September 12th: Council Meeting
- Monday, September 25th: Regular Council Public Hearing/Discussion Night
- Tuesday, September 26th: Council Meeting
- ❖ *September 29th – City Council receives 2024 Proposed Operating Budget*
- Monday, October 9th: Regular Council Public Hearing/Discussion Night
  - Public Hearing #1 on 2024 Proposed Operating Budget
- Tuesday, October 10th: Council Meeting
  - City Council Operating Budget Work Session #2 (Department Directors)
- Monday, October 23rd: Regular Council Public Hearing/Discussion Night
- Tuesday, October 24th: Council Meeting
  - City Council Operating Budget Work Session #3 – Amendment Discussion
- ❖ *November 3rd – City Council Budget Amendments Due*
- Tuesday, November 1st: Joint Plan Commission and City Council Meeting for Zoning Overhaul Discussion
- Monday, November 13th: Regular Council Public Hearing/Discussion Night
  - Public Hearing #2 on 2024 Proposed Operating Budget
- Tuesday, November 14th: Council Meeting
  - City Council action on 2024 Proposed Operating Budget and levy
- Tuesday, December 18th: Joint Plan Commission and City Council Meeting for Zoning Overhaul Discussion

**Additional Dates:**

- Saturday-Sunday, April 29th-30th: Eau Claire Marathon

- Monday, June 19<sup>th</sup>: Juneteenth Celebration
- Friday, July 28<sup>th</sup>: LWM Local Government 101

### **Employee Spotlight:**

Here's our next spotlight. (Give a shout-out to a City employee [using this form](#):).

Today, we highlight **Chris Knappmiller!**

A co-worker said this about "Chris goes over and above to help others out. He's not afraid to learn new things and brings a lot of wisdom to the table. You can always count on him for anything and he's a great co-worker to have the pleasure of working with!"

Here's some more information about Chris ...

- Your position: "My job with the city is buildings and grounds, and I've been working with the city for almost three years."
- What people may not know: "My 10-year-old daughter and I like to skateboard/rollerblade when we have the time."
- Favorite activities: "My daughter and I have a hobby with Microscopy, we like to grow bacteria and study them under the microscope."
- Best part about working for City: "I was born and raised in Eau Claire and being able to give back to this community in some way is rewarding and fun."
- Life philosophy: "Treat every day as an opportunity to learn or help someone learn."



Al,

Per our phone conversation, I will go over the following talking points:

The city of Eau Claire/Festival Foods is currently under contract for one 22-minute show with the budget of \$20,000. As with any show of this size and nature, costs associated with the show have already been incurred.

Over 50% of the budget has been used for Product, Insurance, etc.... we currently have on order

630 - 3" shells

199 - 4" shells

91 - 5" shells

43 - 6" shells

1 - 8" shell

The contract states that if the sponsor cancels within 120 days of the show, there is a 25% cancellation fee. We are not looking to collect this fee; instead, we would like to find a solution to allow Ace Pyro to complete the contract as described.

Ace Pyro does not have the ability to shoot two smaller shows at two separate locations. The logistics and overall integrity and quality of the Eau Claire show would suffer if we attempted to do this. We also do not have the additional manpower and equipment needed to shoot two shows at separate locations.

We discussed three locations to replace Carson Park location:

### **Pedestrian high bridge**

This is by far the most desirable location from a fireworks display operation point of view for the following reasons:

1. Elevated launch site over water. This provides better viewing from multiple locations up and downstream from the following city-owned parks: North Riverfront Park, Forest St Park, Kessler Park, and Cannery District Park. It would also allow viewing from the four bridges immediately downstream from the high bridge. The two parking ramps would also be good viewing sites, as well as several businesses that are located along the riverfront, as well as several new high-rise apartment buildings. This site is also desirable for fire safety since 75% of the debris fallout area would be over water. I have attached an article regarding the WI DNR views of fireworks debris in

WI waterways. We would also be able to safely shoot the same size shells that we shoot at Carson Park. These shells from 2.5" to 8" in diameter

2. Security is the number 1 priority of a fireworks display operator's job. In the past at Carson Park, we have struggled from the start of day all the way up to the end of the day dealing with spectators who either want to get close to the fireworks or inadvertently wander into our designated safety zone. The ability to block off both ends of the bridge to prohibit unauthorized people from entering our shoot site is essential for a safe and enjoyable show.
3. The high bridge has the least number of buildings nearby. The east side of the river has the cascades paper company warehouse made of concrete and the city shops/transit garage (brick building) these building do not fall within are safety zone but even if they did the chances of people being in them on the fourth of July is less likely than residential or other commercial buildings The west side of the river consists of the vacant northern half of the Cannery District Park and 7 residential dwellings. Once again, these houses do not fall within are required safety distances.
4. As far as road closures are concerned, we don't anticipate any road closure necessary from a fireworks standpoint. The city may want to consider closing a portion of 1<sup>st</sup> St. between Bolles St and Cedar St. for emergency access.

### **Grand Ave. Pedestrian bridge**

While we discussed this location, it is not an ideal location for the Fourth of July fireworks for the following reasons:

1. Due to its location, we would have to reduce the size(diameter) of the shells we use. We currently use shells from 2.5" to 8" shells at Carson Park. We would only be able to shoot shells no larger than 4" from this location. With that in mind, we would have to increase the number of 4" shells shot from 200 shells shot last year at Carson Park to 450 shells. We would also be shooting over 700 3" shells as well.

I want to stress that this is a safe and desirable shoot site for smaller shows like the Eau Claire Winter parade, where we only shoot 12- 4" shells. A show the size of the fourth of July display could potentially lead to an incident with that much product on the bridge.



2. We would anticipate having to close several streets to facilitate this show. Graham Ave from Gibson St. to Main St. would have to be closed as well as First Ave from Lake St. to Grand Ave.
3. The amount of residential and retail, commercial buildings in the immediate vicinity of the Grand Ave bridge is more concentrated. These buildings do not fall in the safety zone but the corresponding parking areas surrounding them would attract spectators and may encroach on our safety and fall out zone areas.

### **East Hill/ Forest Hill Cemetery**

The East Hill/Forest view cemetery is a good shoot site from a Fireworks display operation point of view for the following reasons:

1. We have used this shoot site in 2020 and 2021 and have found it to have an elevated shooting area that allows good viewing points through some portions of Eau Claire. We are also able to use the same size shells that we use at Carson Park
2. Securing the shoot site due to its remote location up a dirt service road prevents unauthorized people from entering the shoot site both during the set up and during the show itself.
3. Our required safety distances and fallout area is primarily located in the Forest Hill Cemetery, which keeps residential or commercial building concerns to a minimum.

There are several concerns with this shoot site.

1. The East Hill/Forrest Hill Cemetery shoot site is located on city owned land that is situated in the middle of a residential neighborhood. To gain emergency vehicle access several roads need to be closed to facilitate this.
2. The proximity to the residential neighborhood has raised a few noise complaints in the past.
3. As stated, our debris field is the Forest hill cemetery, some of the debris may end up on the grounds of the cemetery leading to some concerns from residents.

4. Unlike Carson Park or the High Bridge, obvious viewing points are much harder to figure out. There are several great viewing points to view the fireworks show and if we had kept the show there, in time people would figure out those viewing areas and found many different options compared to Carson park.

I believe the City of Eau Claire needs to look at the fireworks more like the City of La Crosse does. La Crosse shoots the fireworks from the top of Granddad's bluff overlooking the city. This is a more distant view approach to viewing fireworks versus being right on top of them as in the past at Carson Park.

I think the City of Eau Claire would be better served by shooting the fireworks display from the high bridge where it can be viewed by more of the city's residents in more of the city's parks from a location that the city has deemed as a historic structure that needed to be saved.

# DNR: Chemicals in fireworks decline rapidly in water

Appleton Post-Crescent - July 8, 2017

**Question:** Why does the DNR look the other way when cities like Neenah, Menasha and Green Bay shoot off fireworks over the water on the Fourth of July? Isn't there a law against polluting waterways? The debris is falling into our drinking water.

**Answer:** The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources sent me a one-page document, dated July 5, concerning its stand on launching fireworks over water.

The document said "studies have shown chemicals in fireworks decline fairly rapidly in surface waters."

The DNR recommends the use of fireworks that contain no or low perchlorate, which the Environmental Protection Agency has identified as a health concern in drinking water.

It also recommends a plan to minimize and remove debris from the water, including a cleanup immediately after a fireworks show and a more thorough cleanup the following day to comply with the state statute on littering.

Neenah shoots its fireworks over the Fox River from Doty Park.

Mike Kading, Neenah's parks and recreation director, said any noticeable debris that falls on land is picked up or swept up by park employees or by the city's fireworks contractor.

The water isn't combed for debris.

"Anything in the water is negligible," Kading said. "It's just fragments of paper. It biodegrades really quickly."

The DNR said fireworks have no known effects on fish or groundwater and no known long-term effects on human health.

"Sensitive populations should take the same precautions as they would for fireworks that are set off over land to avoid short-term air-quality impacts," the DNR said.

No DNR permits are required for setting off fireworks, though a permit might be needed to anchor the firing platform or to stage the platform barges.

"Given lack of potential impacts and short duration of increase in pollutants, wastewater permits are not needed," the agency said.

###